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SPEECH BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE
VICEROY AT BHIKNA THORI ON
10TH DECEMBER 1938.

YOUR HIGHNESS,

Lady Linlithgow and I have been greatly touched by your most kind words. We shall always remember the friendly and hospitable welcome which we received from Your Highness to your delightful country, of which we have heard so much and our visit to which has given such extreme pleasure to us and to our family. It is many years since a Viceroy of India has visited Nepal and I appreciate to the full the great compliment which Your Highness has done me in extending your present invitation to me.

Nothing could have been more delightful than the setting which Your Highness has chosen for our Camp. The memory of the amazing shikar which you have provided for our party will indeed be a lasting one; and I cannot be sufficiently grateful to you for having given me a chance to shoot rhinoceros. Let me take the opportunity to say how greatly we have enjoyed the activities of the wild but apparently friendly tusker who stepped in occasionally to make his brief appearance on the stage in the river valley.

But deeply grateful as Lady Linlithgow and I are personally to Your Highness and your family for their great kindness to us, I would like to say how much I appreciate both your invitation and all the incidents of our

memorable visit as but another indication of the depth and sincerity of the relations between Nepal and the British Empire, and of the warmth of the personal feeling entertained by Your Highness for His Majesty the King Emperor. His Majesty took a special interest in my visit to Nepal and I know how familiar he is with the long and friendly record of the association of our two countries and how close is the interest which he takes in Nepal and in the welfare of Your Highness and the Ruling family. I will not fail to convey to him without delay Your Highness' very kind message and I can assure you at once how much he will value it. I thank Your Highness once again most warmly on behalf of Lady Linlithgow, my family and my staff for your unvarying kindness to us all and for the immense trouble you have taken with every detail of this never to be forgotten visit.

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ST. ANDREW'S DAY DINNER, DATED
30TH NOVEMBER 1939.

I am truly grateful to our Chairman for his generous words about me and I thank you, Gentlemen, for the kind way in which you have received the toast of my health. Your approval and your support are very precious to me, and these are times when a man needs such strength as he may muster.

Let me say at once how much I have enjoyed Sir Andrew Clow's speech. I do not remember, in all my long experience, listening to a larger *number* or a higher *quality* of Scottish stories than those with which he has regaled us this evening. And what is still more surprising is that to me they have all been new! I haven't heard one of them before either in my *private capacity*, or *in Council*. Where does he get them from? Why has he so many stories while I have none at all? There is a mystery here. I must ask Sir John Ewart to probe it for me. I have my own theory, though a naughty one, and I am a little shy of expounding it. I suspect that Sir Andrew has persuaded the *Censor* to supply him with all the X'mas stories from the Calcutta mail! If that should indeed be so, I am *prepared to wager* that some of the ones he has not told us would be very well worth hearing, and I for one am sorry he threw them out!

Our Chairman, in one or two of his remarks, has approached a little nearer to

politics than I regard as entirely safe on an occasion such as this. But I do not quarrel with him on that account. The truth is that we Indians are so full of politics in these days that it is hardly possible to talk about the "land we live in" without bumping against our political problems.

I was particularly glad to hear Sir Andrew Clow say that he feels that today there is *less bitterness* than in the past in that field in which politics are touched by *racial issues*. That is a tremendous gain, and if I could feel that I personally had made any contribution, however slight, to that achievement, I should indeed be a proud man. I myself hold most strongly that *nothing but mischief* comes of exaggerating the part that race plays in human affairs. I remember wading through two tremendous tomes by a turn-coat of the name of *Houston Stewart Chamberlain* who lived in (and who toaded) pre-1914 Germany. Incidentally, I should not be a bit surprised if Stewart Chamberlain contributed to the hopeless confusion of thought that has led to Herr Hitler's recent lapse. I quite forget Chamberlain's argument, but the sort of conclusion at which he arrives, after endless and labyrinthine argument, is that men with *long heads* are a deal better than men with *short skulls*, and thence, by simple syllogism, he marches like a brass band to this final conclusion: that when the long head meets the short, he is bound, by sacred and imperious duty, and without other offence proved, by violent means to end the transgressing life of the Brachycephalic gentleman. So much for the ethic of contemporary Germany! I carry my

scientific researches *no nearer home*, but will content myself by observing that in my judgment these pursuits are as foolish when they are indulged in in India as I hold them to be in their Germanic setting. [Nor do I think very differently of communal strife, which is to my mind a sad and hurtful thing.]

Indeed, I have striven with all my strength over these past years for unity and a common purpose in India. I will not cease from trying. I am most anxious to make such contribution as I may towards a good outcome of the present political difficulty. But I cannot refrain from reminding you that I shall not succeed unless I am helped. In such a position, one side alone cannot, by itself, make the appropriate adjustment. Compromise is essential. The *source of true compromise is strength*. *Wisdom* is its other parent. The process of compromise is ever a stern test. It is so much easier to die for a cause than truly to live for it. I pray that we may be successful; but I do not conceal from myself that a most anxious time lies ahead.

Mr. Chairman, at the end of your speech, you made reference to *my wife and family* and I thank you for your kind words, and can assure you that Her Excellency will as greatly value your remarks when, as I will, I tell her of them. It is true that she is not a Scotswoman but, as you have said, much may be done with a Yorkshire lass, if you catch them young enough. You have mentioned that one daughter has recently left the home circle. One gentleman wrote

to me at the time of my daughter's marriage a kind letter in the course of which he remarked that he could not doubt but that Lady Anne's departure would be a source of new happiness and peace in the home!

Let me again thank you all for your kindness to me this evening. I shall return to my duties refreshed and fortified by your encouragement and support.

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NOTES FOR CALCUTTA CLUB SPEECH
BY HIS EXCELLENCY, DATED 30TH
DECEMBER 1939.

Grateful.

Let me say at once that I take no credit for presence here in face of what Sinha calls "manifold duties and worries".

The worse the times, the more I want a good dinner—if I can consume an excellent meal in such first rate company, so much the better.

The good is two-fold:
 food for body,
 food for spirit.

As for the objects of this club and the opportunities—you know how strongly I favour and appreciate both and how much I wish the club prosperity.

Our Chairman has just told me a secret. He says that amongst the good fellows of all persuasions who frequent this hospitable club, it is the practice to repair to the *verandah* and there to settle the affairs of the world. I am not a little tempted to take advantage of his suggestion, and to submit, for the consideration of the verandah, some of those interesting and insoluble problems that I am called upon to face. It occurs to me, however, that if the responsibility for action were to be too directly associated with the

occasion of disputation, the harmony to which His Lordship has made such feeling reference might wear a trifle thin. Heaven forbid that I should be responsible for the perpendicular descent from the verandah in record time of some (till then) entirely non-violent contestant. Much better that the even flow of post-prandial deliberation should not be agitated by any too urgent contact with harsh reality.

Be that as may, I shall carry away with me this evening one turn of political strategy, culled from Lord Sinha's speech, which will (I don't doubt) prove of immense value in time to come. "If you want", he said, "to improve the condition of the masses, you must instal near at hand a cosy set of rooms into which you may admit the fair sex". If I may say so, my experience of 52 years in this world moves me to give unqualified support to that proposition. It seems a pity, though, that such a good idea for winning the next election should have occurred to a gentleman whose writ of summons to Parliament is now happily immune from the vagaries of the electorate. May I, however, as an old hand at electioneering, suggest to the modest author of this most seductive plan that he will be well advised to avoid, until after the polling days, any too direct mention (however salutary) of hands so near the club that may rock cradles.

I am sure that our Chairman will not be disturbed by a little lightheartedness on my part, or suppose that this means that I have not taken to heart those parts of his speech in

which he has touched upon some of the graver aspects of the existing position of public affairs. That position, as you well know, presents certain features which are to me matters of grave disappointment. I have tried very hard since I came among you to extend and strengthen in India that unity without which this country cannot achieve either her fullest political growth, or her due place and status among the nations. I have sought, too, to make my proper contribution towards persuading the doubters of all parties as to the true worth and the worth-whileness of that system of provincial autonomy which for almost three years has been the law of the land. Were I to pick out the more depressing portents of these times, I could, I think, make a disconcertingly convincing case for holding that in both directions I have in great degree failed of my purpose. For signs of disunity are everywhere apparent, while in 8 Provinces the breakdown provisions of the Act are in operation. But, for my part, I refuse to concentrate my gaze upon the more gloomy elements of the present situation, and for the good reason that in my judgment those are largely the more superficial and the more transitory elements, while the deeper and more lasting, and therefore, more significant factors are on the whole far more hopeful, far more healthy. Ancient quarrels may divide, but everywhere there is a growing realisation that unity is a prerequisite of full national development. Believe me, I understand the difficulties, and sympathise with those who face them. Nevertheless, I should be faithless to my charge and untrue to India's highest interest if I were not

determined, so soon as the opportunity presents itself, to strive once again for unity and constitutional progress. There can be no standing still. Either India goes forward, or she recedes. I shall be successful only if those who are in a position to do so will give me their help. The difficulties are real, they are formidable. They will be overcome only if all concerned show determination and courage in overcoming them. *Compromise*, perhaps the highest test of statesmanship, will be essential, and *courage* which is the true parent of compromise. I believe we shall succeed, because I am unable to contemplate failure in an endeavour with the successful outcome of which is bound up the appointed destiny of this great country.

Turning again to the life of this great Presidency—Lord Sinha has made feeling and appropriate references to the lamented death of Lord Brabourne. You know the high opinion I entertained of him whether as friend or colleague.

I would like to take this occasion to say a word of very warm appreciation of the service of his immediate successor, Sir John Woodhead, an appreciation in which I am sure all here will wish to share. I am certain, too, that you share my great satisfaction in the knowledge that Sir John's eminent qualities are not to be lost to India, but that he is to continue to serve this country as one of the Advisers to the Secretary of State.

I regret the minor indisposition that deprives us this evening of the pleasure of His Excellency Sir John Herbert's presence amongst us. I have known him for many

years and his lady too, and I can tell you with all confidence that in Sir John and Lady Mary Herbert, you will find two people who will serve this province most assiduously and most effectively.

Well, Sir, I hear the tramp of armed men without, and the rattle on the pavement of the battery of horse artillery without which in these stormy times I never think of moving, and I suppose the moment of my departure approaches.

Her Excellency.....

Please accept, one and all, my best wishes for the New Year, and my sincere gratitude for your kindness this evening.

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HIS EXCELLENCY'S SPEECH AT
DINNER AT THE VICEROY'S
HOUSE, NEW DELHI, ON 21st
MARCH 1940, TO THE HON'BLE
KUNWAR SIR JAGDISH PRASAD,
HON'BLE MEMBER, E. H. AND L.
DEPARTMENT.

Sir Jagdish Prasad has stood as my colleague and adviser during four crowded and restless years, and the better I have come to know him the more I have learnt to value his unswerving devotion to duty, his great public spirit, and his qualities as a colleague and a friend.

As member for the Department of Education, Health and Lands he has been largely concerned with a group of subjects in which I take a very special interest, and upon which it has been to me a matter of the utmost pleasure and satisfaction to work with Sir Jagdish.

He and I are brother Landlords. Had he been available, he would, I feel sure, have given me all the comfort in his power at the time that I and some others were being relieved of most of our worldly goods by a gentleman known as the Welsh Wizard.

I have therefore been glad to find myself in position to hold Sir Jagdish's hand during the period of his despoilment by those whom I shall refer to as the Light Fingered Lads of Lucknow.

In the field of constitutional reform I have derived much help from Sir Jagdish,

who has never spared himself trouble or inconvenience in order to promote the objects we both have at hearts. He has been ready, in the midst of arduous labours of a departmental kind, to take long journeys in order to try, by personal contact, to improve the prospect of negotiations. I am profoundly grateful for his interest, and I am glad to think that the termination of his period of service on my Council will not deprive us of the help of one whose strong patriotism is informed by so much practical experience and by so steady a sense of reality.

Sir Jagdish has had a varied and distinguished career in the public service as District Officer; as Chief Secretary; as Member of Council in the U.P.; and as a Member of the Governor-General's Executive Council.

In New Delhi and at Simla, Sir Jagdish Prasad will be greatly missed, whether in the Executive Council, in his day to day work in the Department for which he has been responsible, or in his capacity as a tactful and successful leader of the Council of State.

He will be missed, too, by a host of friends who have learned to appreciate his qualities of head and heart, and the essential kindness and gentleness of his nature.

I ask you to drink the health of our friend and colleague Sir Jagdish Prasad.

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HIS EXCELLENCY'S SPEECH AT THE
COSMOPOLITAN CLUB, MADRAS,
ON 29TH JULY 1940.

(*Tea Party.*)

COSMOPOLITAN.

Have come to Madras to see for myself how matters are progressing. To discuss with as many persons as possible the position of the Presidency, and the progress of the war effort which you are making.

My wife and I have another reason for our journey. It is that we are truly attached to Southern India having fallen victims to its charms, and so were anxious to see again this pleasant countryside and those who dwell in it before the time comes when we must leave India.

This is not the occasion when you would expect me to deliver anything in the nature of a substantial speech. But I must say a word or two about that subject which is uppermost in all our minds. I mean the war situation.

I do not propose to take up your time with any argument directed to proving the extent to which India is interested in the outcome of this war. I am prepared indeed to accept the verdict of Indians themselves upon that matter. I am entirely satisfied that 999 out of every 1,000 Indians are heart and soul for a British victory in this war, because they feel that such a victory is essential to the preservation in India of much that they most value and of their hopes for her future.

Holding these views, here in this Presidency, and throughout the country are prepared to do their utmost to contribute towards the success of a cause which they regard as their own. That is the spirit in which Indians are proving their sincere attachment to the King Emperor's cause, in many practical ways. It is my profound conviction that in the end it will be found that India's contribution to victory has been invaluable. Let me assure you that your efforts here in Madras are deeply valued and appreciated by us all.

I know that your good Governor, H. E. Sir Arthur Hope, has in a series of excellent speeches made throughout the Presidency, given you a straight and a manly lead in this matter of your war effort. That is just what I should have expected of him.

Perhaps you know that my own name is Hope. I can tell you an amusing story about that. When Sir Arthur first came among you as Governor, a couple of British soldiers were overheard discussing the appointment. "Yes", said one "you may bet the Viceroy does not let the grass grow under his feet. He has put his youngest son into the job of Governor of Madras".

In conclusion, let nothing shake your determination to wage this war to a successful conclusion. Anxious days there are sure to be. Let your courage rise to meet every emergency. That is the spirit in which we shall win this war.

Continue as you have begun and all will be well.

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UNITED SERVICE CLUB, DATED 19TH
SEPTEMBER 1940.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,

Before turning to President's kind speech—thank them for past kindness and hospitality.

Always enjoyed my evenings.

Goli Boli—proper use billiard table.

This Club a very high place in list of Simla Institutions.

I cannot pretend to have liked Simla, though I have tried to.

My constitution declines to accept the physical conditions. My great countryman Dalhousie could not live here at all.

If Alice did indeed shrink when she drank, I can only say she was a very lucky little girl.

Some things I shall miss, apart from friends.

The Beauty of light and shadow across the hills.

The glimpse of the plains below, with Sutlej shinning under a light almost ethereal—a vision vouchsafed during breaks in rains.

As I have said, Sir—

High amongst the major amenities of Simla, I would put this club. That is not a mere phrase designed to flatter its members. It is a tribute by one who believes himself to be as conscious as his neighbours of those

elusive qualities of charm and atmosphere which—by whatever secret alchemy—do indeed attach themselves to some institutions but not to others, and which, where they hold sway, carry comfort to the weary, and add zest to all our activities.

Mr. President. Grateful for kind words, and most gratified by reception toast.

I don't know what contemporary commentators may say—if time to say anything—or posterity (—bone and cave!).

For my part I am content if you who have worked with me in whatever capacity for 4½ years are able feel I have not altogether failed you in those functions of leadership without which no Government can work to best purpose.

You know, as the outside world can't, strength and weakness—sufficiencies and shortcomings.

If—in collective judgment—you find credit balance, then I am content.

Opportunity later thanks senior colleagues without whose help and advice and constant loyalty I could have done nothing.

Tonight wish particularly to express to every member of the services and particularly to those I may speak to again my gratitude to them for the manner in which they have supported me, and for their work since I came out—whether at Headquarters of Government of India or in Provinces.

Their task immensely responsible and in the manner of its performance they maintain—I can avow—the highest standards and traditions to which they have succeeded.

Never have their skill and devotion been more urgently required than at the time:—

For these indeed are testing times. As you have said, Sir, the months of my Viceroyalty that have passed have been full of change and uncertainty. *Together*, through these months, we have faced many issues and undertaken great labours. Let me support memory by a brief catalogue of those events. First the preparations for and the consummation of Provincial Autonomy; the prolonged and arduous attempts—not alas! successful—to bring the Indian States into a common polity with the provinces of British India; the disappointment of a Royal Visit abandoned because of political difficulties in India and the state of international politics; the distressing and anxious circumstances of the abdication; prolonged and extensive unrest in Waziristan and the military campaign in that country, a campaign which, by the way, was by itself sufficient in extent and importance to supply the leading theme for any Viceroyalty; then in the middle of 1937 came the double barrelled attack by Congress upon the non-Congress Government of Bengal, weighed down as that Government was by its heavy commitment of political prisoners and detenus. The first barrel was of course the hunger-strike of prisoners which began in the Andaman Islands and spread to the mainland; the second the proclaimed intention to effect a general gaol delivery in the United Provinces and Bihar, of all so-called political prisoners, which I countered by using my statutory powers in vindication of the principle of discriminating clemency.

That was the first touch of the curb that Congress had felt and they liked it so little that both Governments tendered their resignations which however they withdrew upon their return from the Congress gathering at Haripura; then in 1939 we had the affair of Rajkot and Mr. Gandhi's extraordinary miscalculation in starting a fast. That brings me, after the premonitory rumbles in the international sphere, to the declaration of war with Germany and the tremendous events that have followed; here in India the postponement of the Federal scheme—the best in my opinion that India is likely to see for many a day—and the business of organising, for the struggle, India's resources of all kinds, an effort which is still proceeding apace. Then in November of last year, the resignation of all the Congress Ministries and the assumption by the Governors concerned of responsibility under the breakdown section of the Act. And recently the proposal of His Majesty's Government to widen the basis of government at the Centre coupled with a declaration of future policy.

Gentlemen, I think this brief catalogue of the outstanding events of the past $4\frac{1}{2}$ years gives ample warranty for the claim that few if any periods of like duration since the establishment of British rule in India have been so packed with events and problems of major importance. The gravity too of many of these events has been enhanced by the threatening circumstance of growing communal tension, and if dwarfed by current events, rendered more threatening by the darkening

background of international events. Nor indeed does it seem to me that the remaining 6 months of my Viceroyalty are likely to prove altogether flat or colourless.

Not possible to do more than touch upon many of happenings which I have passed in rapid review.

Must however express warm appreciation performance armed forces during past difficult years.

Royal Indian Navy steadily expanding: craft in commission and men and efficiency.

Their time coming.

For performances Army and Air Force throughout long drawn out campaign on Frontier, I have great admiration.

Difficult trying tedious form of service yet prosecuted with utmost devotion, patience, resolution.

Well aware condition Waziristan not yet satisfactory.

Need not surprise: process recovery always slow—now retarded European War.

Taking conditions North-West Frontier as they are today, after a year of war in Europe in which British arms have suffered grave reverses, we may feel that these conditions do highest credit to those officers both civil and military in whose particular charges these areas have lain.

Don't propose forecast calls likely to be made on *Army in India* before present war ends.

But feel most complete confidence that all troops employed will give a good account of

themselves wherever they serve and whatever ordered to do.

Air Force trusted maintain the great name of the R.A.F.

I would like at this point to pay a tribute to the Police throughout India for their services during the years I have watched their performance. *Staunchness* and *reliability* often in face of most trying circumstances, have commanded my profound admiration.

I hope I may claim the calls of all these several emergencies have not too often caused me to neglect the ordinary humdrum business of administration—a thing so little understood by the public, yet so vital to the public interest. I would like you to hear it from me that I regard the proper performance of those unexisting yet vital functions as the *Chief Glory* of my Office.

You, General Wilson, have spoken of my interest in Agricultural Improvement. Nothing pleases me more than, in face of difficulties, Centre and Province have maintained their efforts to better the cultivators' lot.

Agricultural commission—pleasure look back—experience an advantage. Knew something of the life of the village.

Speech of President contained several passages inviting me to deliver myself of a few indiscretions about the present and the future of this country.

Perhaps he feels that my experience on the J.S.C. equips me with far seeing vision. We did our best to look ahead and I think the scheme we evolved was a sound one.

I shall not be surprised if after an immense amount of talk, our heirs in that endeavour produce a Constitution uncommonly like the one they have so recently spurned.

Long vision called for in constitution making. The shorter view in the day to day conduct of affairs. If you look too far ahead you see more and more of the traps and ten and ten of the escapes. It is only fair to you to warn you that the man in charge of the bus doesn't pretend to be able to penetrate the fog that surrounds us.

Like the old taxi man, I watch the curb, and trust to smell to recognise the right corner when I come to it.

So if I bump you into a lamp post, don't blame me!

It is my belief that, but for the war, I would have held the scheme of 1935 together, including Federation.

But while I am sorry for the delay which must now ensue, I am not prepared to regard the position as tragic.

Why should I or any of us? Our conscience is clear. Our performance has been true to our declared purpose in India.

Our effort consistent and sincere. And we shall hold to our policy, and all I've seen convinces me that policy is sound.

If delays, these are not of our making.

Believe me! when India is indeed ready to do without us, she will find means to break the news.

I do not, I must say, hear that note today.

And I do not expect the parting to come soon.

None of us can tell what Great Britain will be after the war. It is *there* that the key lies. Will she be weary of her world position, of Empire, or will she find a new confidence, a new impulse from the trials through which she will have passed.

That India will have need of her help I have no doubt.

For my part I hope we may not be turned from the duty which is ours and which we can perform with far greater advantage to India than could any other country. I hope too that we hold firmly to our policy of leading India towards full self-government under the British Crown.

A great mission and in due time, a great achievement, worthy of the GREAT NAMES of those who have laboured in India and of the toil and sacrifice of last 200 years.

Her Excellency. Family. Charlie. Viv

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CALCUTTA CLUB DINNER, DATED
30TH DECEMBER 1940.

MR. CHAIRMAN (MR. R. A. HADDOW), &c.....

Thanks.

When I accepted I thought this was goodbye. Since then extension. These are not times when anyone who can stand up can call himself tired. But it is no light burden to face.

Much has happened since I last had the pleasure of being your guest. On the whole, and remembering the collapse of France and the situation in early summer, we have very much to be thankful for, and extremely good grounds for hoping that our position may be greatly improved by this time next year.

It is clear that the Italian strategical plan has received destructive blows in Libya and Albania.

We cannot say how long it may be before the full fruit of these victories can be reaped. We shall know more about this by the close of the campaigning season, say by mid April.

Meantime we may count upon both the relentless energy of those who direct, and the dauntless courage of the troops that carry out their directions.

If I were asked where it is that the heart of all that is best and truest in India lies today, I would answer without hesitation—with those brave officers and men who have

made the great name of India ring once again through the corridors of all the world by their skill and valour in the recent actions in Northern Africa.

And India may feel proud indeed that by her valiant military effort, copiously supported by the enormous volume of equipment and stores poured into the Middle Eastern theatre of war, she has been so largely instrumental in delivering against the forces of tyranny and ruthless aggression a blow which in the end may well prove mortal.

None of us here would wish to be too much elated by this measure of success, but let us not on the other hand underestimate the magnitude of this victory which is still in process of being exploited.

Allowing for the demands made upon Germany by their vast commitments elsewhere, it seems probable that they could count, for offensive action in and through the Balkans, upon a mass of manœuvre of some 40 first-class Divisions, or say 800,000 men. That is a formidable force. No doubt heavy detachments would require to be made to guard against any Russian pressure upon their left flank as they swept south-east into Asia Minor.

But given an Italian army threatening the mouth of the Nile, and an Italian navy and air force active and powerful throughout the Mediterranean, the prospects offering to a German drive through Turkey towards the head of the Persian Gulf and southwards to grab the Suez Canal, are patently attractive. And indeed we shall be wise to expect a

GERMAN campaign in the Middle East, and to be prepared for it betimes. That is a *rendezvous* which has been kept by other European conquerors and would-be conquerors. The prize is indeed a rich one—control of the main corridor between East and West. I shall be surprised if Herr Hitler does not turn up there sooner or later. But how different the prospect before Germany; how infinitely more hazardous those operations for Hitler and his Marshals now that the Italian armies no longer menace Egypt and the Canal from the Libyan shore.

Abyssinia, Eritrea, and Somaliland are isolated and beleaguered; Albania is a shambles for Italy's armies rather than a spring-board for new conquests. Italian strongholds in the Dodecanese, cut off from all supplies, await their fate. Metropolitan Italy itself no longer listens for the pealing of the bells of victory but rather for the avenging bombs of the R.A.F.; while her navies, no longer content to rely for safety upon swift retreat, hide shamefully in harbours which cannot protect them from the vengeance to come. That is the picture; those the circumstances, which confront both Germany and Italy. That is the measure of the tremendous relief which comes to us through the resounding triumphs of General Wavell and his troops, and the skill and valour of the Greeks. And you and I are entitled to strengthen our determination and to feed our courage and confidence by the knowledge that India has played so great a part in bringing these things about.

Do not misunderstand me. There are desperate struggles ahead of us, and

disappointments and anxieties too. But that in the end our just cause will prevail we need feel no doubt. The thing must take time. But that in the end we shall gain mastery over these two wicked men I have no doubt.

Of politics in this country, I have no more to say than I said before the Associated Chambers of Commerce the other day. I am, I will say, much saddened by the present position. I have never—I hope I may say with your agreement—since I came to India lectured those with whom I have found myself in disagreement, or pretended to any monopoly of wisdom. But I will, within these closed doors, confess to you that it is my honest conviction that those who ought now to be my colleagues but who, despite all that I could do through long and patient months of negotiation, have now declared themselves my opponents, have suffered from a leadership grievously shortsighted and utterly inadequate to the requirements of these present times. I feel indeed that we are missing an immense opportunity to forward the truest interests of India.

My instinct tells me that at the back of many of our political problems and disappointments lies the poverty of our people and the relative paucity of our national resources. I think I see, as an immediate consequence of our position in the war, an opportunity of tremendous potentiality to hasten our industrial and manufacturing development. And mark my word, I am not thinking of industrial development as an alternative to

political or constitutional advance. Rather I am inviting you to agree with me in holding that the two are closely inter-related. Certainly in my own country, economic development has commonly preceded and not followed political evolution. The tragedy oppresses me is that the very men who ought to be by my side—supporting, strengthening, stimulating me and mine in the unique opportunity for fortifying the foundation of India's national polity, seem doomed to squander these moments, which might indeed be golden, in courses which I do not hesitate to describe as unworthy of India and of their own best selves. Those are indeed melancholy reflections.

Well, Gentlemen, in politics we are passing through a bad patch. On that we are all agreed. But I think it is possible to paint the picture in colours over dark. Indeed, I sometimes think that if we were wise enough, we should come to see that these occasional setbacks (of which there have been earlier examples) are inevitable. This one, indeed, has been caused not by the remoteness of our goal but by its very propinquity.

It is the widespread understanding that we have reached the point in the constitutional relationship of the two countries, when the substance of real responsibility and real power are in issue, that has been responsible for widening the gulf between the communities contending for that power. We are now in this regard face to face with facts. In this position it is essential, if the foundations of national unity are to be equipped to bear the weight of the

constitutional superstructure which it is proposed to rear upon them, that the communities should find means for mutual tolerance and co-operation for the common good. That is the process which I hope and believe is going forward today—not without difficulty, I know, but nevertheless going forward in the minds of individual men and women of all parties. (Constitution in Bengal, Punjab, Assam and Sind.)

Thanks.

■

TEA PARTY AT THE COSMOPOLITAN CLUB, MADRAS, ON 30TH JULY 1941.

Grateful kind hospitality.

Come again to see friends.

Beautiful fertile Province, friendly people.

Last year I stressed value of your war effort, moral and spiritual as well as practical and material.

Courage and faith	} Contagious.
Fear and doubt	

You have nobly responded. We are all proud. Great things with War Gifts. Spitfires, military effort, manufacturing, A.R.P., Civic Guards, and many things besides.

You have done magnificently.

In all this, I know how much you have benefited by that STAUNCH, DEVOTED, HARDWORKING, and POPULAR Madrassi, H. E. Sir Arthur Hope.

Course of the war as I *told* you: hard and uphill.

Under the inspiring determined leadership of Churchill, the Empire has held to its task.

Magnificent performance of Indian troops. TIGER and BULLDOG. The Bear enters the picture.

Invaluable Aid—

Time is given us. Do NOT allow yourselves to think that we can relax.

Remember that to the courage and staying power of the whole of those who are defending the cause of decency, your *personal* and individual efforts are ministering.

As for India as a whole I believe expansion of Council + National Council will contribute towards efficacy of war effort. Such its purpose, but I shall not be surprised if it makes its contribution towards India's political advancement.

I see this announcement spoken of as niggardly.

It is certainly a long way short of the complete and balanced system of Ministerial Government at the Centre which system is today the law of the land and if wiser counsels had prevailed, might today be in full working order—responding to Indian opinion—assuring India's status—strengthening her internal unity.

The goal to work for the moment the war is over.

■

DINNER PARTY AT THE MADRAS CLUB, MADRAS, ON 1ST AUGUST 1941.

Kind to suffer me again so soon.
Grateful. Monsoon tour customary. Time
of stress and trial—well to see people and
keep touch with great centres of commercial
and financial activity, and Provinces not
always visited.

Last year Farewell. No idea
extension. Glad to do best best. 72 months!

Comparing with last year, great
improvement as regards Supply.

You gave valuable hints. Acted on. I
venture think we have improved. Talked
Controller of Supply, Srinivasan and got
impression things running smoothly.

If things go amiss, tell us and we will try
to put them right. Your contribution to
output valued.

Have spoken elsewhere of war effort—war
gifts and many of you have worked hard.

Governor's wonderful lead.

NOT to speak at length on politics: but 1
or 2 things—

Council Expansion.

*Setting up of National Defence
Council.*

I doubt if Indians have yet understood—

{ Non-official majority.
{ Indian majority.

Most significant for 150 years.

The importance will be better grasped in a little while.

Yet that is the way progress is achieved.

In other directions, it is curious how little true advancement in Status is noticed.

Take the case of the great operations carried through for the repatriation of—debt—operations eloquent of the changeover from debtor to creditor.

Or the raising of the status of our India Representative in South Africa.

Then creation of Post of Agent-General in the U.S.A. with high Ministerial rank in attachment to the British Embassy at Washington.

And the appointment of Sir Shanmukham Chetty as head of our purchasing mission in North America, again a mark of India's coming of age in the field of international economics.

That is the way status in the International World is built up.

While sorry that Federal scheme has been jettisoned: not ashamed of progress registered. Provincial autonomy, despite the monumental folly of Congress still works in 4 Provinces and is ready to be worked again in the remainder.

We are about to work a system at the Centre in which Indians will have the preponderating voice.

Our prestige stands high abroad greatly strengthened by the performance of the I. Army. India stands united in her effort to defeat the enemy.

Hold to it. Your job immensely important.

Feeling frustration inevitable. I share it.

But it is childish.

I am looking forward to Scotland and the Home Guard.

You too would like that.

But here you are leaders and can minister to strength of our arms by helping to steady India.

■

NOTES PREPARED BY HIS
EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY FOR
THE FIRST MEETING OF THE
NATIONAL DEFENCE COUNCIL ON
6TH OCTOBER 1941.

YOUR HIGHNESSES: BEGUM SHAH NAWAZ
AND GENTLEMEN,—

Procedure and arrangements for business.

The whole of the business of the National Defence Council will be conducted in private.

We have no powers, either legislative or executive

Our functions therefore lie within the fields of consultation and advice.

The purpose of our corporate being is to help win the war. That and nothing else.

How then should we conduct business.

Having given these matters my close attention I am clear that we should put away idea of any vote or division of the Council.

It follows that we should not discuss or debate on the basis of any motions, or resolutions or questions put from the chair.

I myself propose, unless I am disabled by any physical circumstances, to be in the chair throughout the Sessions of the Council.

Once any topic is before Council, I propose to allow its discussion until I am satisfied that

I and my advisers have had full opportunity to understand the views of members upon it.

When, in my judgment, that point is reached, I shall so inform the Council, and thereafter invite members to proceed to the next item of business.

As regards the duration of our discussion of any particular topic, I should propose to have due regard to the passage of time in relation to the progress of business.

I do not propose that verbatim reports of our proceedings be taken, and no short-hand writers are present.

My colleagues and I along with our advisers, and the Secretary to the Council will be responsible for making all notes and records to ensure that all concerned are made aware of the various points raised.

Secrecy.

Let me now say a word about *secrecy*.

In the first place. I may tell Council that in conjunction with Secretary of State I had at first contemplated inviting members to take an oath of secrecy, or to make affirmation accordingly. I have however, given the standing and responsible nature of our membership, come to the conclusion that this course is neither necessary nor appropriate.

But I must say this word about the need for absolute secrecy and discretion, in the interests of our fighting men and the safety of their lives.

The only safe rule is to assume that all military information may be of use to the enemy.

His intelligence service is exactly in the position of a person seeking to solve a jig-saw puzzle. The harmless little piece of news (as it appears to us) that you or I may let slip, goes into its place in the general picture which he is so busily building up, and *may* give him just the hint he requires to penetrate a whole series of vital secrets.

My purpose, and the purpose of all who will address you from the official side, is to give you, not as little, but to give you as much information as we may.

It is therefore my duty, and I am sure you will not hold it as an impertinence, to beg you to be constantly watchful about the security of any circulated paper, and even more of the risk of any notes you may take going astray. It is in short necessary that we should all regard ourselves as bound absolutely to secrecy.

That is all I need say about this most vital matter of secrecy.

It will, I think, promote smooth working if you will kindly address the chair at all times.

I hope members will address Council without rising from their seats.

I propose to invite each member by name to comment on any points before us. In so doing I shall say the order, taking right and left of the room, alternately.

Members, if they do not wish to address Council upon any subject, will please make this clear to me. Council will I think find this a better method, in a small House like

this one, than that of "catching" the chairman's eye.

A word now about the agenda for this day.

I should propose today to take the items in the order in which they appear upon the paper. Each statement on a new topic to be followed by a discussion.

In this connection, it was suggested to me that it would be to the convenience of members if an interval of time were to lapse between the presentation of a topic and the resultant discussion. I considered that carefully, and have come to the view that given the pressure upon our time and the multiplicity of subjects, any plan of that kind would be most difficult to conduct, and that we had better hold to the more simple arrangement, and have a talk at once after the question has been introduced.

The Commander-in-Chief has suggested, and I have agreed, that it will be well that he should divide his own contribution to our proceedings into 2 parts. The 1st, in which he will touch upon matters of general interest in the form of a narrative of his recent journeys to the Middle East and to London; he will deliver in a moment.

The second— a longer statement—in which he will deal in some detail with the problems of war that most concern India, he proposes to deliver somewhat later in our proceedings.

The Commander-in-Chief has kindly made available at our opening session, the following Principal Staff Officers:—

- (i) The Deputy Chief of the General Staff, to deal with matters of special interest affecting the

Defence Department on which enquiries have been made by members.

(ii) The Adjutant-General, who will talk to us about the recruiting position.

(iii) The Master-General of the Ordnance, who will deal with the supply of weapons and munitions.

Members will appreciate that each of these officers stands before the Council in the same capacity as would a civil servant. In short, we should put them in an unfair position if we were to invite them to criticise the policies which, under the instruction of the Commander-in-Chief and the Government, they are concerned to implement. Council will I know protect their position.

I may here say that certain matters raised by members have been dealt with direct with the enquirer. Thus His Highness of Bikaner put in a query about research on prophylactic against influenza, which is a highly technical matter that could only be dealt with at length in a longish note

Then certain other points were handed in rather too late—there were some queries by Mr. Jamnadas Mehta—to be dealt with at this session. I am sure members will recognise that the whole staff, military and civil, are working at top pressure, and that we must give them at least the 10 days, the minimum notice I suggested, in which to look up, and prepare any cases. In the case of Mr. Mehta's points, special arrangements

have been made, through the Commander-in-Chief for the enquirer to visit the Department and to examine them there. But I should deprecate this expedient being regarded as part of regular practice.

That, I think, covers the arrangements for today's business. It may well be that experience will suggest some improvements in the scheme of proceedings I have outlined. I need not add that I shall be most ready to consider any suggestions as to business.

Meantime, I have myself proceeded on the basis of making our approach as flexible as possible and of avoiding anything like a body of rules or standing orders, preferring—if you will agree—to proceed by trial and error, in the light of commonsense, and in the firm resolve to extract from our sittings the best possible contribution towards the purpose in view, which is speedy victory to our arms.

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DINNER AT THE BENGAL CLUB ON THE 17TH DECEMBER 1941.

I am most grateful to Mr. Blandy for his kind speech and for your kind welcome.
Horace—

Particularly good of you to invite me in this 6th year with the threat of a 7th overhanging you.

Government of India and Calcutta.
Olympian atmosphere. Cosmopolitan.

Though it hardly seems so it is 4 years since I was last entertained by you—in December 1937.

Much has happened since that time. In 1937, our internal political position seemed promising.

Ministerial Governments functioned in all Provinces.

The prospects of bringing India to unity under Federation seemed good. I hoped that the momentum we had gathered would carry us through the inevitable reaction.

But I knew that we had set forth on a most difficult journey.

We were dealing with an ancient people but one whose past had not experienced popular government by the parliamentary method.

We were faced by an economy which was characterised by an extreme unevenness in the distribution of wealth—a situation not likely to prove for long compatible with a rather

wide franchise, a situation destined plainly to promote internal stresses.

We were coping with a party system still rudimentary, and which had been born as a nation-wide conception. Congress because it was largely directed against British Power in India. The Muslim League because it was opposed mainly to Congress and therefore conditioned by.

These organisations were led, more especially Congress by men accustomed to move on the wide stage of nationalism and to make an international appeal.

How natural, then, that parties directed by these men should tend to look askance at anything that concentrated power and opportunity in the Province.

There were other reasons of course for the withdrawal of Congress Ministries from 7 Provinces—Fear of effective criticism and of damage to electoral prospects. The absence of a great balancing body of unattached voters, such as (in the U.K.) would at once destroy any party that ran away from its responsibilities.

The war, looming up over horizons dark with ancient hatreds, preceded by a series of international crises, each more violent and more terrifying than its predecessor, had contributed its part in unsettling our polity—such was the general picture, such the circumstances in which, not without the deepest misgivings, and certainly to my own real personal regrets, I was compelled by the merciless logic of events, to lay aside, at least for the time being, the massive plan for

unifying all India in a single federal system, the *Crown* of the structure designed by the long labour of Parliament for the Reform of Government in India.

Well! the 7 Congress Ministries went out of office. Four Provinces remained to work provincial autonomy. I believe the future will show how much Bengal, the Punjab, Sind and Assam have done for Indian political development, by the admirable way in which, despite difficulties, they have continued to support ministerial government.

That, Gentlemen, is the fate of our setback in working the Constitution Act.

Subsequent political history, with which I dealt at length when I spoke to the Associated Chambers of Commerce, is fresh in your memory. It is concerned in the main—and inevitably—with the difficulty which arose between Government and the Party commanding the majority in seven Provinces, the moment that party refused to carry the burden of office and of responsibility for Government.

You know the outcome. I waited long and patiently. Then, when the great parties had made it clear that they would not help me, I proceeded (with the agreement of His Majesty's Government) to do my best, without their help, to strengthen the Central Government for its task of aiding the war effort of the Empire.

While I regret that matters could not proceed further and more smoothly towards the early realisation of a unified India moving towards full partnership in the

British Commonwealth of Nations, I do wish to say this: that there is very much in the political history of these recent years which we are entitled to regard as being of good hope for the future.

Great and varied experience has been gained by many of us. Some of that experience painful.

Some Provinces have shown that self-government under the Act can be sustained, given the will to make it work.

In others it has been shown that where local conditions render ministerial rule unworkable, an alternative system of government is available, which is tolerable to the people for a time, however much all may regret the necessity of using the breakdown provisions of the Act.

It has been widely understood that the nuisance value of cutting the traces is not very great when there is a neat little engine at the back of the cart to keep it moving till the team chooses to return to its work and to its rewards.

And this headway has been made and all this experience has been gained without any undue disturbance in the country. I know there are some who feel apprehension at what they take to be the rising pressure of criticism and political discontent in this country.

I can only judge the matter to the best of powers.

There may I suppose be something in the notion that the man sitting on a volcano is

ill-placed to see its hidden fires. One would expect though that he might feel the growing warmth.

My view is that the position in the country is sound. Difficult it is and difficult it always will be. But I find a wonderful response to every call we may make for effort and for sacrifice to win this war.

I believe too that no more than an insignificant minority desires anything but a complete victory for our arms. I go further, and I say with deep conviction that never within my knowledge of India, has there been less racial bitterness than at this moment. So, while there have been a time of great labour and often of much anxiety—I am NOT ASHAMED of the years behind me.

I cannot give you any picture of the future because I do not know what is to be future of this war. I am not pessimistic about that future. I think the war must tend to unify India. I believe there is a strong probability that it will bring about a profound change in the attitude of politically-minded India towards the British, a change wholly for the good.

For India needs British collaboration now. She will need it again after the war.

Meanwhile the equality with Great Britain which is desired by the politicians, has been quietly, but definitely established by the Indian Army in every theatre of war.

All evidence shows this. Indian officers and sepoys have assumed a new poise, a new self-confidence. They have, by their bravery and devotion to duty, earned a new place in

the scheme of things. A comradeship, the respect and admiration of European troops—Officers and men. We must marry these deeply important developments to the political experiences I have described if we are to gauge the forces that will mould post-war India.

I do not this evening propose to attempt any general appreciation of the war position. But you will expect me to say a word or two upon that particular field which is nearest to us.

I have expected for some years that what has come about would happen. I even took the pains to go to *Moulmein, Tavoy, Mergui the Tenasserim river and Victoria Point* in 1936—a country I had walked and waded through in 1908-09, and to land once again on various islands of the *Mergui Archipelago*.

I take the Jap menace most seriously. They are an active, ambitious, thoroughly efficient and brave people, who will stick at nothing.

I am quite clear we shall have a lot of trouble on their account for some time to come.

2 ships.

But the strain upon the British—Navy and Air—tremendous—unprecedented, unprepared for. Atlantic, North Sea, Mediterranean—Red Sea—Indian Ocean: Pacific. You can't be strong everywhere. It must take time to build up against this new menace.

The stuff is coming along. It will arrive in increasing volume and with increasing frequency.

I am not satisfied with the present position.

I give you my promise that General Wavell and I will do all we can to get more weapons and more planes into India, and do our best to use this growing power to the very best of our capacity. More than that you will not expect me to say.

Meantime, I ask for your support and your confidence.

Without pretending to any superior wisdom, I would say that I and those who share the heavy burden of day to day decisions, may have to ask you for patience and endurance in circumstances which seem to invite criticism.

Well! I feel pretty sure we shall make some mistakes. But I have very great faith in the ability of my principal military adviser a tried warrior and administrator and a great leader of men.

We shall do out utmost—he and I. But remember we depend very greatly upon your support and your resolution. We must be prepared to take hard knocks.

That we shall in the end stop the Jap, I have no doubt. Where, or how soon, we shall stop him I cannot tell you.

Meanwhile, you and I, are sustained and strengthened by the matchless courage of our own kith and kin in that brave little island now wrapped in the damp darkness of

northern winter and in our ears still sound those words familiar now, and for as long as our language lasts.

“We will never give in. We will fight them on the sea and in the air, on the beaches; in the cities; in the plains, the jungles and in the hills. We will never surrender.”

I

NOTES OF THE VICEROY'S SPEECH
TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ON SATUR-
DAY, AUGUST 8TH, 1942.

Never, in my long experience of public service, have I felt a heavier sense of responsibility upon me.

Deterioration all round.

Reports from all important Provinces show a worsening atmosphere.

A dangerous moment. Externally war news is worsening and likely to be heavy for some time to come.

Internally—cost of living is high and *rising*. Any interference with transportation would immediately, with stocks short, tend to put up prices.

From the very beginning, we have been perfectly clear what Mr. Gandhi would try to do. He would (a) rush the Resolution through the A.-I.C.C. as fast as possible, and conceal or conciliate criticism in the A.-I.C.C. Certain of the changes in the Resolution since it was passed by the Working Committee are plainly designed to meet such criticism—the stressing of federation and the emphasis on the future position of autonomous Provinces.

Now, the only effective amendment has been ruled out of order.

We have known, too, that from the moment Mr. Gandhi gets his mandate, his

mind will be bent on choosing the best time and method to attack established authority. Any interval of time before he strikes openly being used to perfect his plans and to prosecute *underground* agitation. There will be so softness or mercy for us, so much is sure.

A very heavy burden of responsibility rests upon us to support the administration in the Provinces. It is upon those governments that the brunt falls of maintaining law and order. It is they who in great degree must pay the immediate price if we delay unduly the arrests of the leaders of this most dangerous movement.

You will have due regard, I know, for the police, who have a severe trial before them in the discharge of their duty, both officers and constables. We should not choose to be unfair to them. We dare not risk any collapse of morale and discipline which might mean that *when* we call upon them—too late—the executive instrument upon which we depend may bend in our hand and fail.

I have very carefully pondered the question of whether we ought to permit our judgment and our plans to be deflected by the fact that Mr. Gandhi has announced his intention to send me a letter. Everyone knows that His Majesty's Government are not going to yield to the Congress/Mr. Gandhi's blackmail, because His Majesty's Government have said so. What are the purposes behind the letter? I would say that there are 3. (1) To gain time. (2) To gain prestige and advertisement. (3) To throw us on to the defensive, and to deprive us—if we

delay—of a clear-cut reason for arrest at any particular moment. The passing of the Resolution is the signal for Civil Disobedience, and all India knows it.

To the point about good manners on my part. *I.e.*, waiting till I get the letter before we act: I must say that I cannot accept that ground at a time like this.

Now, at this moment, our reason for arrest is crystal clear and plain to all the world. The A.-I.C.C. has sanctioned C.D. and appointed Mr. Gandhi to lead the movement.

If we let this moment go by, we shall have missed our cue. The letter will be unreasonable but most polite. My reply would be polite. Well! What Next? Surely Chiang Kai-shek's reply, expected in three days, might be awaited? Or even President Roosevelt's (whose Colonel Johnson discussed so much with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru!)? And so forth and so on. And all the time, the organisation and the agitation would go on; and every day our task and the task of the Provincial Governments and their servants would be growing more difficult and more dangerous. The newspapers, quite uncontrolled, would be busy digging the political grave of this Council. Our prestige would be steadily sinking. Moderate men would lose heart. We should be recognised by all and sundry for what we should have shown ourselves—a body of weak men.

I could multiply the unwisdom of procrastination. Thus I am myself profoundly uneasy as to the effect of any prolonged period of agitation upon the Indian Army. You may be perfectly sure

that any long period of political uncertainty and strain, and the very least doubt as to whether this Council does or does not mean to be firm in face of the Congress threat, will progressively increase the risk of communal clashes. The fact—even the rumour—of communal mischief in the recruiting areas, profoundly disturbs those who are serving with the colours. They fear for the safety of their wives and families. Desertions by men anxious to go to their villages to look after their dear ones, become widespread. Those who remain at duty are distracted and divided. Then again, there exists, parallel with what I have described, the peril that political contagion may spread to the army and reduce—if not destroy—its effectiveness for war. I have not mentioned the strangulation of the army by the collapse of the civilian services that move it, munition it, and feed it—for these consequences of widespread disorder are obvious.

For all these reasons my advice is to order the arrest forthwith of the Working Committee, and the orders to Provinces to go ahead.

■

NATIONAL DEFENCE COUNCIL (7TH
SESSION), 12TH—14TH NOVEMBER 1942.

We have had a useful as well as an interesting Session.

I have been well placed, sitting in this chair, to observe the development of this Council from its beginning.

I think it is going from strength to strength.

Its characteristics as a corporate personality are the good feeling, good temper and good comradeship with which its proceedings are conducted; the zealous and helpful attitude of all its members; and their very practical approach to the subjects that come before us.

I do not think that any Parliament or Council in any belligerent country, comparable in its constitution to this body, hear such good and informing papers, and memoranda. I am very greatly obliged, as I am sure all my colleagues are, for the trouble taken by hard worked officers in preparing the material to be laid for you.

I have no doubt of the great practical value of this Council.

I hope members feel, as they are entitled to feel, that they have borne a direct part in the recent successes in Egypt and Libya.

I have just seen a statement showing the large and very varied supply of war material of many kinds sent from India to Egypt during the past 6 months and the Middle-East—a great part of it the work of Indian hands and labour.

I am myself confident that this Council, by its influence with Departments here, and by the influence of members in their own Provinces all over the country, has contributed materially to fortify and stimulate the war effort generally.

I am particularly for the good attendance given by Your Highnesses and by members from all over India. I attach great importance to that. I realize too that many members attend often at great inconvenience to themselves.

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■

HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY'S
ADDRESS TO THE FOOD CONFERENCE
HELD AT DELHI AT 11 A.M.
ON MONDAY, THE 5TH JULY 1943.

GENTLEMEN,——

I am happy, on behalf of my colleagues and myself, to welcome you to the headquarters of my Government. I am most grateful that you should have undertaken long and uncomfortable journeys in order to assemble here at very short notice.

I have no intention of delaying you with a long speech for this is strictly a business gathering; indeed if ever men were brought together on urgent and important business that is true of you today. The complex and intractable problem of food supply and distribution is by far our most serious anxiety in India. Though we have other grave preoccupations, some directly connected with the war and others part of the normal burden of administration, I can assure you that for some months now food has been first in our thoughts. We have a tremendous task to perform and as each of you knows only too well any failure results not merely in hunger, misery and discontent but in the gravest repercussions on law and order and on our whole economy.

And in this campaign many of our difficulties are new. We seek guidance wherever we may find it, from old famine reports and from the latest experience in

other countries; but it is far from easy to apply the lessons to unprecedented conditions in India.

In fact, we have been fighting in the dark and on a very wide front. We have had to face heavy and almost impenetrable country. We have been advancing painfully by trial and error. Sometimes we have encountered such obstacles that we have been compelled for a moment to retrace our steps. Sometimes perhaps we have issued orders to our forward troops that have been impossible for them to obey, but this is no new occurrence in jungle warfare. All the time we have at least been fighting. We have survived some very critical hours, and fight on.

And the fight will not be over tomorrow however well you plan today. You will, I hope, be able to map out some of the country ahead, to pool information and to locate some of the enemy. But you will still have to fight and in fighting, morale is surely the decisive factor, morale which is made up of determination (in fact just plain guts) and of mutual trust. If this conference succeeds in breeding fresh determination and firm mutual trust, a very great deal will have been achieved.

There has been much public criticism of alleged failures both at the Centre and in the Provinces, but there have been unsung successes too. I am far from complacent, but I want you to know that I realise how much admirable work has been done by provincial authorities, by district officers working under heavy strain, and by our hard-pressed Food Department here. Rescue

operations of great magnitude have been put through with speed and efficiency and I thank you all for what has been achieved. Do not imagine for a moment that your successes are forgotten. They are not.

Again you will not misunderstand me or accuse me of callousness if I attempt to put things in proportion and remind you that our state might easily have been worse. We cannot expect in India to escape all the sufferings of war—and this situation is of course entirely and solely due to war conditions. In some parts of the country we are in very serious difficulty, and the future is uncertain. But there are, as we all know, millions of unfortunate people in the world today whose past, present and future are all a hundred times darker than ours. Our own trouble is grim but not irremediable, and indeed if I may be forgiven a quotation:—

“The hill hath not yet raised its head
to heaven that perseverance cannot
gain the summit of in time”.

Now I am anxious to release you so that you may get to your business. I have only one more point to make, but it is, I think, the most important of all.

Whatever policy is adopted at this conference—and I sincerely trust that you will be able to achieve general agreement—our plan will fail unless the full co-operation of all units can be assured. There is not the faintest hope of success without co-operation. We have to pool everything, not just everything that happens to come on to the market but everything that can by our most strenuous efforts be made available. It is

useless to postpone our effort until there is a local shortage in our part of the world. A shortage in Cochin and Travancore should be enough to call forth efforts all over India from the south right up to the Provinces whose northern borders march with the Himalayan ranges. Unless we can combine to this extent—and I am not suggesting it is easy—the whole economy of India is in danger and we shall all suffer together.

I am not of course simply tilting at the areas with large surpluses. The responsibility is not by any means all with them. Areas that normally are just able to meet their own needs must work for a small surplus and deficit areas must reduce their deficit by their own efforts. It must be our endeavour throughout the year to increase every surplus and reduce every deficit.

So the burden is fairly and squarely on each one of us. I urge you with all the seriousness at my command first to seek a plan that will attract general agreement, and then to resolve that it will be implemented with full loyalty and with ruthless determination throughout the length and breadth of the great territories you represent.

I

DINNER PARTY GIVEN BY RULING
PRINCES ON 15TH OCTOBER 1943,
AT ROSHANARA CLUB, DELHI.

YOUR HIGHNESSES, LADIES & GENTLEMEN,—

As His Highness the Maharaja Scindia has pointed out this is a remarkably representative gathering of Princes, the greatest gathering which has been seen in the Capital for many years. My wife and I are deeply grateful that this entertainment should have been arranged in our honour and we are much touched by the tribute that you have paid to the work we have been able to do in this country.

Among our many crowding memories of India some of the most vivid and some of the most pleasurable will recall our relations with the Princes of India. Your friendly welcome tonight and the most generous way in which our health has been proposed and received are only of a piece with much that has gone before. But at the end of our time I assure you we do appreciate most deeply this signal evidence of your goodwill towards us. I am particularly gratified myself that you should have mentioned in such glowing terms the service that my wife has been privileged to render to India. It is a source of great pride to me that there should have been such wide recognition of the unceasing effort that she has put out to assist during all these 7½ years the causes most worthy of her aid.

In the course of my Viceroyalty I have seen a great deal of Your Highnesses' work for the benefit of the people of your States. I have been impressed by signs of social advance and of solid work of real importance in many States. In our tours through your territories my wife and I have enjoyed your private hospitality and if I may say so we value very deeply the personal friendship which attaches us to so many of you.

I am glad to think that as we leave India the war news should be so consistently excellent. I paid tribute yesterday to the outstanding contribution to the war effort that has been made by the Princely Order. I gladly repeat that tribute. You have rendered splendid service and the victory which will be the reward of all such endeavour comes, each day more clearly into view.

Soon we shall be on our way home and it is heartening to know that we bear your good wishes with us. Our warmest thanks to Your Highnesses. All success and happiness to you all.

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PRESENTATION BY AFGHAN
CONSUL-GENERAL OF MARBLE
TABLE FROM HIS MAJESTY
THE KING OF AFGHANISTAN
ON 16TH OCTOBER 1943.

Will you be good enough to inform His Majesty King Zahir Shah that I have been much gratified to receive the very handsome marble table which he has so kindly presented to me? I am deeply touched by the friendly sentiment and personal thought which actuated this gift and by the good wishes which accompanied it. In sending to His Majesty my warmest thanks, I desire to express my appreciation of the endeavours he has always made to maintain the friendly relations which so happily exist between Afghanistan and India. Will you be good enough to convey to His Majesty an expression of my highest regards and of my best wishes for the peace, prosperity and happiness of himself and Afghanistan?

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